

of conversation, she picks up a newspaper and leans back, her social duty done.

Her favorite expression of praise for a person is, "He's just as common as an old shoe." It seems rather strange to hear her say this after a visitor has left, especially if the visitor is a distinguished professor!

When the family is planning to go for a ride and someone mentions her, naturally supposing that she is going, she says, "Oh, I'm not going." There are protests from Grandma of "Why, of course you're going, Mrs. Harper!" "No, I'm not. Nobody wants an old woman like me along." There are many protests at this. Our preparations continue. "I'm not going," says Mrs. Harper again. "I'm going to stay home and wash clothes." The youngsters beg her to go. The older people see that her brown hair is freshly combed. Later one of the children says, "Mrs. Harper is going, isn't she?" "No, I'm not going," says Mrs. Harper again. But we notice that she has changed her shoes. Finally when

we are nearly ready, Grandma says to her, "You'd better change your dress, Mrs. Harper." Up she goes to change her dress, and not another word of protest is heard.

One day the family had been downtown, and they came home without her knowing it. When she found that they were at home, she told me that we had better hurry to get dinner on the table. I said that I had seen the family come home quite a while ago. "Well, I don't know nothin'," she replied. "Nobody ever tells me nothin'. If it was raining soup, my bowl would be upside down."

When we were washing dishes together one evening I told her something of interest and she commented, "Well, you've had more education than I've had, Marjorie. I don't know nothin'." Perhaps she has not had much schooling, but Mrs. Harper has done more with her life than many college graduates have done. She has spent her whole life helping others, and she has made other people's tasks easier.

Autobiography [Part III]

IRENE BROWN

Before graduating from nurses training, I started serving in the capacity of Supervisor of Nurses of the Eli Lilly Research Clinic at City Hospital. Here we had both an in-patient and an out-patient clinic where we were doing research on blood dyscrasias and hypertension. In this position I continued on at the hospital with the Lilly Company until my marriage, April 4, 1941.

The saying goes that all nurses marry doctors, and so it was in our case. When one of the doctors was called to active duty with the Army Medical Corps Reserves in

March of 1941, he just couldn't see his way clear to go to Fort Knox, Ky., without a nurse, so we were married in the Madonna Chapel of the Third Christian Church, Indianapolis.

Being the young officer's wife in pre-war days was great fun. We had a whole house in a nearby town and enjoyed the officers clubs, swimming pools, and frequent excursions to Louisville. Everyone was gay, with no thought of threatening war and little sympathy for all the trouble brewing in Europe and Asia. But this was a period of bliss before the storm. For

only four months later, in August 1941, came that overseas call which proved so disastrous.

Watching the army transport, President Grant, one of the converted luxury liners, sail out of the San Francisco Bay was only the first of many sad times for me. For the terrifying news of the attack on Hawaii and the Philippine Islands came just a few months after my husband had arrived in Manila. The fact that he had been sent to the Philippines by mistake did not make the news any more bearable, for with the onset of the war I knew he wouldn't get to come back home at the end of his first year as he had orders from General MacArthur stating that he had been mistakenly sent overseas because Corps Area Headquarters had forgotten to change some of his records to a married status!

After the fall of Bataan and Corregidor, all personnel in the Philippine area were reported as "missing in action." I had received a telephone call from Manila in October before the attack, and two cablegrams after the war started, but all communications were cut off in April of 1942.

By the end of this year I decided that the thing for me to do was to join the army nurse corps. I had tried to keep busy by working in a private and industrial clinic, by teaching at the Red Cross, and giving blood every six months, but I realized that it would likely be a long, hard war and felt that I wanted a part in it. So it was on Christmas Eve, 1942, that I reported to the Air Force Hospital, Miami Beach, Florida.

After a year in Florida where I worked in the operating room for the most of the time, I was sent to the School for Air Evacuation at Bowman Field, Ky. to become a Flight Nurse. For four months we had rigorous physical training and

extensive flying experience along with a rigid academic course. For two additional months we prepared for a highly specialized overseas assignment, for which we sailed in May, 1944, from Hampton Roads, Virginia.

The Panama Canal was an interesting sight, and although we spent three days there we were not allowed to get off our ship. However we were allowed on deck all the time so were able to see a great deal as we were piloted through the narrow channels of that wonderfully engineered project.

Australia was fascinating and I hope someday to return to the lovely city of Perth where we spent two days while anchored at the harbor of Freemantle. The people were charming and unbelievable hospitable. They live a gracious, pleasant life, much in the British style, but with much less class distinction and with a higher scale of living for the working man. The climate of Western Australia compared favorably with our southern California weather.

We had the usual experiences of an initiation into the Shellback club on crossing the equator, and of two consecutive days the same while crossing the international date line. On our journey we passed through three oceans and three seas; the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, and the Carribean, Tasmanian, and Arabian Seas.

When we docked in Bombay, India, we had been at sea for forty-three days, and had traveled more than half-way around the world. Here we were put on an Indian train where we back-tracked, all the way back across the continent of India to a seaport on the opposite coast, Calcutta. The huge city was intriguing with an amazing contrast between the lavish wealth of the rich and the destitute

condition of the poor. The famine was still on and there were forever corpses lying along the street. But we enjoyed our trips of evacuating American patients across the continent by air to Karachi where they were then taken on back to the United States.

For the next ten months I flew throughout Indian and Burma. As the Mars Task Force pushed south in Burma, toward Rangoon, we followed close behind, landing at the most recently captured fields and evacuating the battle casualties back to India. We flew as far west as the China border and as far south as Mandalay.

In January of 1945, I learned by cablegram from the War Department that my husband had been rescued by the American Rangers at Cabanataun in the Philippines and that I was to return to the United States. Needless to say, it was almost too good to be true after all those months and years of waiting, but I was tremendously relieved and wasted no time in trying to get out of the China-Burma-India theater.

I flew to New Delhi, the capital of India which is a beautiful and spacious city. From there, on to Karachi, the "gateway of India," so called because all of the planes coming into India come through there. The Arabian Sea was a beautiful sight from the air, as were the ancient cities of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Alexandria, and Baghdad. After landing in Tripoli, we flew on to Cairo, Egypt. Here, for the first time, we started seeing the western influence; the traffic no longer went on the "wrong side of the street," and there were more Italians, Greeks and other Europeans than Englishmen, whom we had been see-

ing since Australia. Cairo is indeed a cosmopolitan city, and I have seen no more beautiful homes anywhere than along the banks of the Nile. Going through the pyramids was quite an experience, as was seeing the Sphinx and other Egyptian historical sights.

Casablanca was an interesting city, though extremely French, and with nothing to buy except cologne! It is sold by the quart and gallon jars, and apparently the people use it instead of water for bathing purposes, for there were no bathtubs!

The Azores is a tiny dot in the Atlantic, and one wonders how the navigator ever finds it, as one indeed wonders again thirteen hours later when we slowly settle down over Bermuda. On this lovely island there were numerous beautiful resort hotels, golf clubs, and luxurious homes, but the weather was quite cold with a strong ocean breeze that nearly blew us away.

Best of all, the airport of Miami looked like Paradise to us. No Indians, no Arabs, no Italian co-belligerents, or any of the other strange looking humans we had been seeing on each stop before. All along the way from Miami to San Francisco, the good old United States looked like the best country on earth. At each stop I thought, this is really "God's country," for we have so much more than the people anywhere else in the world.

Thus I arrived in San Francisco, just a week after leaving India, but a trip around the world and almost four years since my last visit there, for the best reunion of my life, for my husband was there at the airport to meet me.